BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 12-17 April 27, 2012

- **B.C.'s economy expands 2.9% in 2011**
- **Retail sales inch ahead 0.4% in February**
- **Visitor entries to B.C. slip 0.5% in February**

The Economy

- **British Columbia's economy expanded 2.9% (*chained 2002 dollars, measured at basic prices*) in 2011, building on the rebound (+3.2%) registered during the previous year.** The advance was broadly based as real gross domestic product (GDP) in both the goods (+5.6%) and services (+2.0%) sectors posted robust growth.

Among goods-producers, the most significant gains were recorded by the province's oil & gas extraction industry, which surged ahead (+14.4%) as demand for raw resources continued to grow. However, British Columbia's mining industry did not fare as well, as GDP in mining contracted sharply (-3.2%), mainly due to a slump in metal ore mining (-17.4%). Exploration efforts, on the other hand, were ramped up during the year, as support activities for mining and oil & gas extraction soared (+23.8%).

B.C.'s construction sector gained (+6.7%) in 2011, as the oil and gas engineering (+19.0%), transportation engineering (+8.1%), and other engineering (+26.6%) industries posted substantial increases. Unlike previous years, residential building construction (+1.0%) played a comparatively minor role in the increase in construction.

Increased demand for raw materials was at the root of a double-digit rise (+11.2%) in GDP in B.C.'s forestry & logging industry. This marks a second straight annual increase after declining for five years.

The province's manufacturing sector continued to advance (+3.1%) in 2011, with the largest contributions coming from increases by the machinery manufacturing (+19.7%) and wood products (+5.8%) industries. Other key industries in the manufacturing sector - pulp & paper (+2.9%) and food (+2.6%) producers - posted more modest gains.

On the services side, growth was primarily driven by increased activity in transportation & warehousing (+4.1%) and finance, insurance, and real estate (+3.2%). Health care and social assistance (+1.9%) and professional, scientific and technical services (+1.7%) also made notable GDP gains.

Both the arts, entertainment and recreation (-4.4%) and food services and drinking places (-2.0%) industries registered slowdowns in activity in 2011. In the case of food services, this marks a fourth straight annual slowdown for that industry. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Alberta (+5.2%) and Saskatchewan (+4.8%) posted the fastest rates of growth at the provincial level.** B.C. (+2.9%) ranked third among the provinces, and fifth overall when taking into account the increases recorded in Nunavut (+7.7%) and Yukon (+5.6%). Northwest Territories (-5.5%) was the only region in the country to register a decline in GDP in 2011. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **In 2010, households in British Columbia spent an average of $56,812 on goods and services.** Purchases associated with providing shelter for a household, including both

Report — Canada/BC Labour Market Agreement: 2010/2011 Employment Outcomes Three Months After Program Completion

Did you know...

In 2010, roughly 80% of British Columbians made at least one financial donation to a charity or non-profit organization, excluding those who donated to coin collection boxes.

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 11-008-XWE

accommodation costs and utilities bills, accounted for the largest share (29%) of total expenditures. Goods and services related to transportation (19%) and food (14%) also accounted for a significant portion of total household spending. On average, households in British Columbia spent $1,101 on alcohol and tobacco products, and more than four times the average household expenditure on reading materials ($249).

At the national level, households spent an average of $53,016 on goods and services. Provincially, Alberta ($61,134), B.C. ($56,812) and Ontario ($55,161) recorded the highest levels of average household spending. The lowest level of average spending was reported by households in P.E.I. ($44,856).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Receipts earned by retailers in British Columbia rose slightly (+0.4% *seasonally adjusted*) in February.** Increased revenues generated by gasoline stations and motor vehicle & parts dealers were the primary drivers of the overall increase, offsetting weaker sales at sporting goods & hobby shops and health & personal care stores.

Nationally, retail revenues inched lower (-0.2%) in February. Total sales were up in four provinces: Quebec (+0.7%), Saskatchewan (+0.7%), B.C. (+0.4%), and Nova Scotia (+0.1%). While P.E.I. registered the largest decline (-2.6%), downturns in Ontario (-0.9%) and Alberta (-0.6%) contributed the most to the decline in the national total in dollar terms. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Wholesalers in the province registered a 4.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) jump in sales in February recovering ground lost in each of the two previous months.** This increase was largely built on improved earnings by wholesalers of machinery & equipment and building materials.

Canada-wide, revenues generated by wholesalers climbed 1.6% in February. Receipts were up in most provinces with Newfoundland & Labrador (+6.5%), Saskatchewan (+6.0%) and B.C. (+4.1%) posting the largest increases. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

Work Absenteeism

- **In 2011, approximately 8% of British Columbia's full-time employees were absent from work for all or part of an average week.** Roughly 6% of absences were attributable to illness or disability, while 2% were due to personal or family responsibilities. This translated into an estimated total of 9.9 days of lost time per worker in B.C. The lowest incidence of absenteeism was recorded in Alberta (7%), while the highest rate was found in Saskatchewan (10%).

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-XWE

Research & Development

- **Businesses in British Columbia spent $1.5 billion on research and development (R&D) efforts in 2009, down sharply (-8.6%) from the previous year.** At $350 million, the province's manufacturing sector was responsible for nearly one-quarter (23%) of all R&D spending. However, the total amount invested by industries in the manufacturing sector was significantly less (-6.6%) than the sum spent on R&D in 2008. Also spending comparatively less on R&D in 2009, was the scientific research services industry (-3.3%). B.C.'s oil & gas extraction industry, however, was one of the few to post an increase in R&D spending (+9.6%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Infoline Issue: 12-17
April 27, 2012

Author: Ian Darling
(250) 387-0684
Ian.Darling@gov.bc.ca

Originally published in *Business Indicators*, Issue 12-04

Canada/BC Labour Market Agreement: 2010/2011 Employment Outcomes Three Months After Program Completion

About the Labour Market Agreement (LMA) program

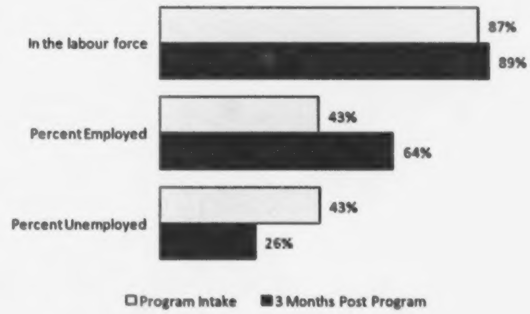
The LMA program, which is administered by the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation (JTI) provides six years of federal funding (approximately $66 million per year) for provincial labour market programs and services to help increase labour market opportunities. The programs and services are aimed at those who are unemployed but not eligible for Employment Insurance benefits or programs, and those who are employed and low-skilled, that is lacking a high school diploma, lacking a recognized certification, or who are lacking essential skills (such as literacy, numeracy, and document use).

A key component of the accountability framework for the LMA is performance measurement. Since August of 2009, BC Stats has been conducting follow-up surveys of program participants 3 and 12 months following completion of their program on behalf of JTI. To date approximately 18,500 participants have been contacted to participate in the 3-month follow up survey and of those 8,500 have completed the survey. This article looks at the employment outcomes of the 8,630 participants who finished their program during the 2010/2011 fiscal year (April 2010 to March 2011). The surveys were conducted in seven cycles between June 2010 and July 2011, with an overall response rate of 45% (3,878 participants). *Unless otherwise noted, only valid responses to program intake form and survey questions are included and those selected for inclusion provided a valid response to the employment status questions at intake and 3 months after exit (or 3,504 participants).*

Employment Status at Intake and Three Months Post Program

Upon intake to their LMA program, most of the participants surveyed were in the labour force; that is working or looking for work. However, a large proportion of participants were unemployed (43%).

Following completion of their LMA program, significantly fewer participants were unemployed



Three months after exiting a program, the percentage of participants who were unemployed had dropped considerably. More importantly, prior to their program, 4 in 10 participants were employed and 3 months after exiting the program employed increased to nearly two-thirds. As well, among those not in the labour force and those who were unemployed, 46% and 21%, respectively, were attending school or another program at the time of the survey.

Each Development Region posted a solid increase in the percentage of participants employed between intake and 3 months after completion of a program. While the Northeast didn't have the highest proportion of participants employed 3 months after completing a program (Nechako earned the top spot), it was the region with the largest percentage point increase (+39 percentage points). Only the percentage employed in the North Coast was appreciably below the average (45% versus 64%).

The percentage employed increased considerably within each Development Region

Development Region	Survey Respondents	% Employed	
		Program Intake	3 Months Post Program
Vancouver Island/ Coast	703	39%	61%
Mainland/ Southwest	1,598	40%	63%
Thompson/ Okanagan	442	56%	66%
Kootenay	213	45%	67%
Cariboo	214	54%	62%
North Coast	89	31%	45%
Nechako	158	57%	73%
Northeast	82	27%	66%
Total	3,504	43%	64%

Transitions between Employment Statuses

From employment to...

Among those who were employed at intake, 85% continued to be employed, while 10% were unemployed. Over 8 in 10 (82%) of those who continued to be employed were working at the same job they had before or while attending their program. While one might wonder why they continued in the same job, 54% were earning more per hour after their program, including one-quarter who were earning at least 10% more. Those who chose to find a different job faired better though, with 62% having higher wages, including 51% with hourly earnings increased by 10% or more. Over half (55%) of those who found a new job also had an increase in the number of hours worked at all of their jobs (if they had more than one), compared to 29% who remained in their prior employment.

From unemployment to...

For those who were unemployed at intake, over half (52%) were gainfully employed 3 months after exiting their program. The transition from unemployment to employment varied by Development Region, with Nechako and Northeast participants most often being employed, while those in the Kootenay and Mainland/Southwest regions were less likely to have found employment.

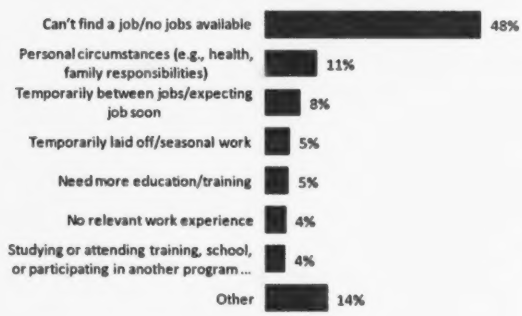
The percentage employed 3 months after exit was highest in the north for those who were previously unemployed

Development Region	% Employed
Vancouver Island/ Coast	50%
Mainland/ Southwest	53%
Thompson/ Okanagan	48%
Kootenay	56%
Cariboo	50%
North Coast	40%
Nechako	63%
Northeast	61%
Total	52%

Compared to their previous job, 48% of participants who were unemployed moved into a job where the hourly wage was higher, while the hourly earnings were lower for 36%.

The 38% who remained unemployed 3 months after exiting their program most often said the main reason was that they couldn't find a job or no jobs were available.

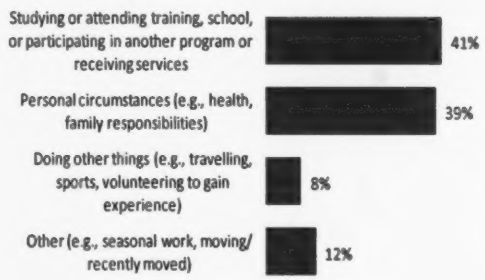
Nearly half of participants unemployed before and after their program said they couldn't find a job or there weren't any available



From not participating in the labour force to...

Over 3 in 10 (31%) participants who were not in the labour force prior to their participation in the program were employed 3 months after exiting their program, with an additional 37% actively looking for work. The remaining 32% who were not in the labour force most often cited attending school or participating in another program or service as the main reason.

Most participants who were not in the labour force before and after their program were attending school or participating in another program



Participant Characteristics and Employment Outcomes after Three Months

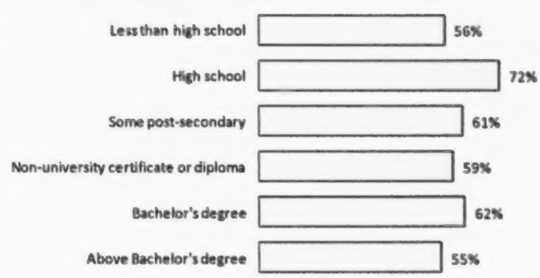
A few of the demographic characteristics available will be examined in this section to determine if there are particular groups that have had greater success.

Educational Attainment

The highest level of education for the majority of participants in LMA programs was less than high school (19%) or high school (35%). Those with some post-secondary (17%) or a certificate or diploma (13%) make up the next largest category, while those with a bachelor's degree (12%) or higher (4%) are in the minority.

Interestingly, those with less than a high school education and those with degree above a bachelor's have similar employment outcomes and the group with the highest employment is those with a high school education. This could be an indication that it takes longer for participants with higher levels of education to find employment. The results of the 12 month outcomes survey may provide some insight into this peculiarity.

Those with a high school education were most often employed 3 months after their LMA program



Each Development Region posted a solid increase in the percentage of participants employed between intake and 3 months after completion of a program. While the Northeast didn't have the highest proportion of participants employed 3 months after completing a program (Nechako earned the top spot), it was the region with the largest percentage point increase (+39 percentage points). Only the percentage employed in the North Coast was appreciably below the average (45% versus 64%).

The percentage employed increased considerably within each Development Region

Development Region	Survey Respondents	% Employed	
		Program Intake	3 Months Post Program
Vancouver Island/ Coast	703	39%	61%
Mainland/ Southwest	1,598	40%	63%
Thompson/ Okanagan	442	56%	66%
Kootenay	213	45%	67%
Cariboo	214	54%	62%
North Coast	89	31%	45%
Nechako	158	57%	73%
Northeast	82	27%	66%
Total	3,504	43%	64%

Transitions between Employment Statuses

From employment to...

Among those who were employed at intake, 85% continued to be employed, while 10% were unemployed. Over 8 in 10 (82%) of those who continued to be employed were working at the same job they had before or while attending their program. While one might wonder why they continued in the same job, 54% were earning more per hour after their program, including one-quarter who were earning at least 10% more. Those who chose to find a different job faired better though, with 62% having higher wages, including 51% with hourly earnings increased by 10% or more. Over half (55%) of those who found a new job also had an increase in the number of hours worked at all of their jobs (if they had more than one), compared to 29% who remained in their prior employment.

From unemployment to...

For those who were unemployed at intake, over half (52%) were gainfully employed 3 months after exiting their program. The transition from unemployment to employment varied by Development Region, with Nechako and Northeast participants most often being employed, while those in the Kootenay and Mainland/Southwest regions were less likely to have found employment.

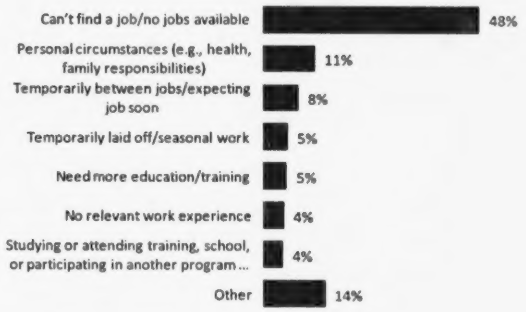
The percentage employed 3 months after exit was highest in the north for those who were previously unemployed

Development Region	% Employed
Vancouver Island/ Coast	50%
Mainland/ Southwest	53%
Thompson/ Okanagan	48%
Kootenay	56%
Cariboo	50%
North Coast	40%
Nechako	63%
Northeast	61%
Total	52%

Compared to their previous job, 48% of participants who were unemployed moved into a job where the hourly wage was higher, while the hourly earnings were lower for 36%.

The 38% who remained unemployed 3 months after exiting their program most often said the main reason was that they couldn't find a job or no jobs were available.

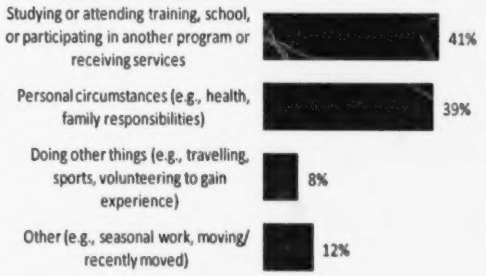
Nearly half of participants unemployed before and after their program said they couldn't find a job or there weren't any available



From not participating in the labour force to...

Over 3 in 10 (31%) participants who were not in the labour force prior to their participation in the program were employed 3 months after exiting their program, with an additional 37% actively looking for work. The remaining 32% who were not in the labour force most often cited attending school or participating in another program or service as the main reason.

Most participants who were not in the labour force before and after their program were attending school or participating in another program



Participant Characteristics and Employment Outcomes after Three Months

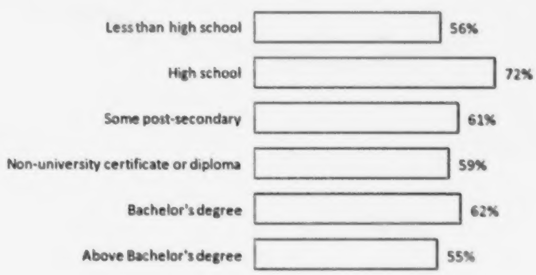
A few of the demographic characteristics available will be examined in this section to determine if there are particular groups that have had greater success.

Educational Attainment

The highest level of education for the majority of participants in LMA programs was less than high school (19%) or high school (35%). Those with some post-secondary (17%) or a certificate or diploma (13%) make up the next largest category, while those with a bachelor's degree (12%) or higher (4%) are in the minority.

Interestingly, those with less than a high school education and those with degree above a bachelor's have similar employment outcomes and the group with the highest employment is those with a high school education. This could be an indication that it takes longer for participants with higher levels of education to find employment. The results of the 12 month outcomes survey may provide some insight into this peculiarity.

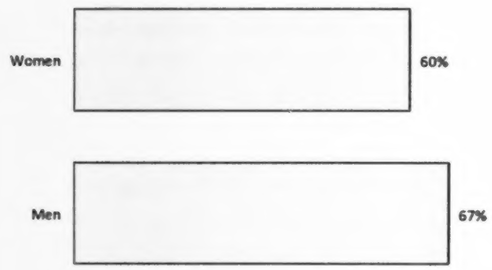
Those with a high school education were most often employed 3 months after their LMA program



Gender

Slightly over half (53%) of participants surveyed were men. After exiting their LMA program, nearly 7 in 10 men were employed, whereas the proportion of women employed was 7 percentage points lower (60%).

The proportion of men employed 3 months after exiting their program was higher compared to women.

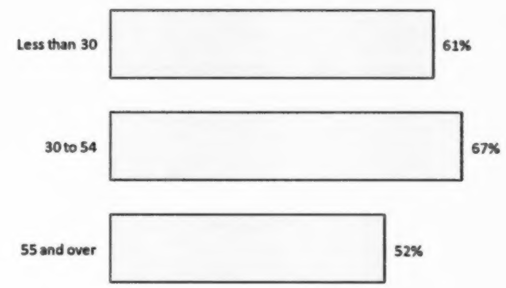


Age

Approximately one-third (34%) of participants surveyed were under 30 years of age, about half were aged 30 to 54 and 11% were 55 years of age and over.

Participants between the ages of 30 and 54 met with the most success in attaining employment by 3 months after exiting their program, followed closely by those less than 30 years of age.

The employment outcomes of youth and those aged 30 to 54 were greater than those of older workers



For more information about the Canada/BC Labour Market Agreement and yearly outcomes reports, please visit: http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/labourmarketagreement

Please note that the participants selected for inclusion in this article represent a subset of the LMA participants included in the Canada/British Columbia LMA/STTF 2010/11 Performance Outcome Report. Participants selected provided a valid response to the employment status questions at intake and 3 months after exit (3,504 of 3,878 survey participants). Only valid responses to program intake form and survey questions are included in the analysis.

Infoline

April 27, 2012
Issue 12-17

Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca or choose RSS

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/2012	% change on one year ago
BC	4,597.9	1.0
Canada	34,670.4	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 8)		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	2010	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	203,147	5.9
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	167,140	3.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,899	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	26,166	2.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Feb 2012	3,199	1.0
Merchandise Exports - Feb 2012	2,766	5.3
Retail Sales - Feb 2012	5,136	0.4
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Mar 2012)	one year ago	% change
BC	1.6	2.2
Vancouver	1.8	2.1
Victoria	1.5	2.0
Canada	1.9	2.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Mar 2012	prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	-1.7	
Labour Force - BC	2,471.8	0.0
Employed - BC	2,299.1	-0.1
Unemployed - BC	172.7	0.7
		Feb 2012
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.0	6.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.2	7.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Apr 25/2012	Apr 27/2011
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.20	3.70
- 5 year	5.44	5.69
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Apr 25/2012	Apr 27/2011
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	0.9848	0.9549
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	1.0168	1.0522
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Mar 2012	one year ago
BC	858.29	3.7
Canada	859.73	2.7

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics
For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

New RSS Feeds From BC Stats

BC Stats has published several new RSS feeds, including: Aboriginal Peoples, Business and Industry, Census, Economic Statistics, Education, Environment, Geography and Mapping, Income, Pensions, Spending and Wealth, International and Interprovincial Trade, Labour, Population, Demography and Immigration, and more.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Help/RSSFeeds.aspx

The 2011 National Household Survey

Release dates have been set as:

May 8, 2013

- Immigration; Citizenship; Place of birth; Language; Ethnic origin; Visible minorities; Religion; Aboriginal Peoples

June 26, 2013

- Labour; Education; Place of work; Commuting to work; Mobility and migration; Language of work

August 14, 2013

- Income; Earnings; Housing; Shelter costs

http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/index-eng.cfm

Census 2011 Fast Facts

According to the 2011 census, compared to other provinces, BC's population growth was second only to Alberta over the 2006 to 2011 period. In May of 2011, the census counted 4,400,057 persons in BC, up 286,570 (+7.0%) from the 2006 count. Read more on the 2011 Census page:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, April 2012

Next week

- No periodicals

BC Stats, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
Tel: 250-387-0327 Fax: 250-387-0380 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: BC.Stats@gov.bc.ca